

Message Text

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ACTION OES-07

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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1472

NASA WASHDC PRIORITY

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NASA FOR TERRELL

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: TSPA, UR, US

SUBJECT: US-USSR SPACE COOPERATION: SHUTTLE-SALYUT (04.06)

REF: (A) STATE 110795, (B) MOSCOW 9925, (C) STATE 84701

1. ON EVENING MAY 5 EMBASSY RECEIVED LETTER (DATED MAY 5)
CONCERNING SHUTTLE-SALYUT PROJECT FROM PRESIDENT OF THE
USSR ACADEMY OF SCIENCES ALEKSANDROV TO NASA ADMINISTRATOR
FROSC. INFORMAL EMBASSY TRANSLATION FOLLOWS PARA 2
BELOW. ORIGINAL POUCHED TO NASA FOR TERRELL, REGISTRY NO.
3584671.

2. DEAR MR.FROSC:

I SHOULD LIKE TO DRAW YOUR ATTENTION TO THE STATE OF
AFFAIRS WITH RESPECT TO THE FULFILLMENT OF THE "AGREE-
MENT BETWEEN THE USSR ACADEMY OF SCIENCES AND NASA ON
COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF MANNED SPACE FLIGHTS" OF
MAY 11, 1977 AND TO THE SUMMARY OF RESULTS OF TALKS
BETWEEN REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ACADEMY OF SCIENCES OF THE
USSR AND NASA ON THE OBJECTIVES, FEASIBILITY AND MEANS
OF ACCOMPLISHING JOINT EXPERIMENTAL FLIGHTS OF A LONG
DURATION STATION OF THE SALYUT TYPE AND A REUSEABLE
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SHUTTLE SPACECRAFT.

SINCE OCTOBER 1976, WHEN REPRESENTATIVES OF THE USSR
ACADEMY OF SCIENCES AND NASA FIRST CONDUCTED OFFICIAL
DISCUSSION ABOUT THE PREPARATION OF THE PROGRAM SALYUT-
SHUTTLE, ONLY ONE MEETING OF THE WORKING GROUP HAS
OCCURRED. THE NEXT MEETING OF THE WORKING GROUP,
SCHEDULED IN THE SUMMARY OF RESULTS FOR THE END OF

MARCH - THE BEGINNING OF APRIL 1978 WAS AT FIRST POSTPONED BY THE AMERICAN SIDE UNTIL LATE APRIL AND AT PRESENT IS POSTPONED FOR AN INDEFINITE TERM. ON MARCH 30 MR. N. TERRELL, CHIEF OF THE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS DEPARTMENT, NASA, INFORMED THE USSR ACADEMY OF SCIENCES COUNCIL INTER-KOSMOS THAT NASA "IS STUDYING ANEW THE SHUTTLE-SALYUT PROJECT AND WILL NOT BE ABLE TO CONSIDER THE DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING OF THE WORKING GROUP UNTIL THIS STUDY IS COMPLETED." THE AMERICAN SPECIALISTS' PROPOSALS WHICH SHOULD HAVE BEEN SENT TO THE SOVIET SIDE BY MARCH 1, 1978, ACCORDING TO THE AGREED SUMMARY OF RESULTS HAVE NOT YET BEEN RECEIVED BY US.

THUS THE TERMS OF PREPARATORY WORK FIXED BY THE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE USSR ACADEMY OF SCIENCES AND NASA OF MAY 11, 1977, ARE NOT BEING FULFILLED AND FURTHER WORK ON PREPARATION OF THE PROGRAM IS IN THE STATE OF UNCERTAINTY.

I SHALL BE OBLIGED TO YOU FOR SENDING ME YOUR CONSIDERATIONS ON THE PROBLEMS WHICH I HAVE TOUCHED ON. SINCERELY, ACADEMICIAN A. P. ALEKSANDROV, PRESIDENT OF THE USSR ACADEMY OF SCIENCES.

3. ALTHOUGH THE ALEKSANDROV LETTER ONLY MENTIONS THE MARCH 30 TERRELL-VERESHCHETIN LETTER, ITS TIMING WOULD APPEAR TO INDICATE THAT IT WAS PROVOKED BY THE HINNERS-ZHULIN MESSAGE WHICH EMBASSY PASSED TO INTERKOSMOS ON MAY 4 (REF A). RAPID SOVIET RESPONSE, AS WELL AS VERESHCHETIN REACTION REPORTED IN PARA 3 OF REF B, UNCLASSIFIED

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INDICATES THAT THE SOVIETS ARE BECOMING SERIOUSLY CONCERNED ABOUT SHUTTLE-SALYUT. EMBASSY RECOMMENDS THAT

NASA CONTINUE TO HOLD SOVIETS' FEET TO THE FIRE ON POSSIBILITY OF FURTHER SHUTTLE-SALYUT COOPERATION. INITIATION OF SECOND ROUND OF SHUTTLE-SALYUT TALKS SHOULD DEPEND ON SOVIET FORTHCOMINGNESS DURING INTERPLANETARY COOPERATION TALKS SCHEDULED FOR INNSBRUCK IN JUNE. (REF C).

IN ADDITION, ACTUAL AGREEMENT TO PROCEED WITH HIGHLY VISIBLE AND SYMBOLIC SHUTTLE-SALYUT PROJECT SHOULD ALSO DEPEND ON GENERAL STATE OF US-SOVIET RELATIONS, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT SUCH FACTORS AS SOVIET BEHAVIOR IN SALT, AFRICA, AND MIDDLE EAST -- AS WELL AS THE DEFINITION OF MEANINGFUL JOINT COOPERATIVE SCIENTIFIC WORK TO BE PERFORMED DURING A SHUTTLE-SALYUT MISSION. TOON

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